REMARKS

Claims 41-89 are pending in the present application. Reexamination of the application and reconsideration of the rejections and objections are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks, which follow the order set forth in the Office Action.

Rejection over combination of Dippel and Csordas

Claims 41-44, 46-53, 67, 68, and 73-75 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Dippel et al., U.S. Patent No. 3,390,988 ("Dippel") in view of Csordas, U.S. Patent No. 2,982,614 ("Csordas"). Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claim 41 recites a method of preparing a monolithic hydrated alumina, comprising, in succession, abrading a surface of a part made of aluminum or an aluminum alloy; covering of said surface with a mercury amalgam comprising at least one noble metal to form a covered surface; and exposing said covered surface to a wet oxidizing atmosphere. Claim 67 recites a method of preparing a composite material comprising an alumina and/or an aluminate and at least one other compound and/or element, said alumina being obtained by a method comprising, in succession, abrading of a surface of a part made of aluminum or an aluminum alloy; covering of said surface with a mercury amalgam comprising at least one noble metal to obtain a covered surface; and exposure of said covered surface to a wet oxidizing atmosphere. Claim 67 recites additional steps that are not listed here. While claims 41 and 67 differ in scope, both claims comprise the step of covering an abraded surface of a part made of aluminum or an aluminum alloy with a mercury amalgam comprising at least one noble metal to obtain a covered surface.

Dippel discloses a method of manufacturing metallic images by photographic means on aluminum and aluminum alloys. *See*, c. 1, ll. 31-33. The method includes oxidizing the surface of a base consisting essentially of aluminum to form a porous aluminum oxide outer layer and then forming a non-porous intermediate layer such as by anodically after-oxidizing the base with its oxide layer in a suitable electrolyte. *See*, c. 3, ll. 36-39 and ll. 67-70. After the intermediate non-porous layer is formed, Dippel discloses a number of additional steps whereby a latent mercury image is physically developed. *See*, abstract. Dippel discloses that in order to carry out the method of the invention, it is essential for the porous oxide layer to be separated from the metal by an intermediate layer which is substantially not porous. *See*, c. 3, ll. 61-64. Thus, not only does Dippel fail to disclose contacting the aluminum base with

a mercury amalgam, as required by claims 41 and 67, but Dippel states that it is essential that the aluminum base not be contacted by any mercury ions.

Csordas discloses a process for the production of aluminum oxide comprising amalgamating a surface of an aluminum body and then exposing the surface to oxygen and water vapor. *See*, c. 1, ll. 53-56. The amalgam is produced by contacting the aluminum body with an aqueous solution of a mercuric salt, e.g., mercuric chloride or mercuric cyanide. *See*, c. 1, ll. 60-63. The method of Csordas requires that the surface of the aluminum body be contacted with a mercuric salt. The method of Dippel requires the exact opposite, that the surface of the aluminum base not be contacted by any mercury ions. Given the divergence in the teachings of these two references, one of ordinary skill in the art would have no reason to combine them. In fact, Dippel makes it clear that the metallic images produced using the method thereof would be detrimentally altered if the method were modified to allow mercury ions to contact the aluminum base, as taught by Csordas. As such, one of ordinary skill in the art would not modify the method of Dippel by incorporating the method of Csordas. Based on the foregoing, Applicants submit that the inventions of claims 41 and 67 are not obvious in view of the combination of Dippel and Csordas. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the instant rejection.

Rejection over combination of Dippel, Csordas, and Puskas

Claims 45, 54, 55, 59-61, 83, and 84 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Dippel in view of Csordas and further in view of Puskas, U.S. Patent No. 4,151,267 ("Puskas"). Applicants respectfully traverse. Applicants submit that even if Puskas teaches everything that the Office Action states it teaches, such teaching is not sufficient to overcome the deficiency of Dippel and Csordas, i.e., Puskas fails to provide any teaching that would provide a reason for combining Dippel and Csordas given the complete divergence in the teachings of these references.

Rejection over combination of Dippel, Csordas, Puskas, and Murrell

Claims 56, 57, 62, 65-68, 71-73, 81, 82, and 85 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Dippel in view of Csordas further in view of Puskas and further in view of Murrell, U.S. Patent No. 4,778,779 ("Murrell"). Applicants respectfully traverse. Applicants submit that even if Puskas and Murrell teach everything that the Office Action states they teach, such teaching is not sufficient to overcome the deficiency of Dippel and

Csordas, i.e., Puskas and Murrell fail to provide any teaching that would provide a reason for combining Dippel and Csordas given the complete divergence in the teachings of these references.

Rejection over combination of Dippel, Csordas, Puskas, Murrel, and Davis

Claims 56, 57, 62, 65-68, 73, 81, and 82 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Dippel in view of Csordas further in view of Puskas and Murrel and further in view of Davis, U.S. Patent No. 5,187,138 ("Davis"). Applicants respectfully traverse. Applicants submit that even if Puskas, Murrell, and Davis teach everything that the Office Action states they teach, such teaching is not sufficient to overcome the deficiency of Dippel and Csordas, i.e., Puskas, Murrell, and Davis fail to provide any teaching that would provide a reason for combining Dippel and Csordas given the complete divergence in the teachings of these references.

For the foregoing reasons, claims 41-89 are considered allowable. A Notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If any questions remain, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number given below.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees that may be required by this paper, and to credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 23-1925.

Respectfully submitted,

BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE

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